

Seroe Preto City of Lights marks the change of seasons



Farewell to this year's display



SAN NICOLAS -- One of Aruba's most beloved holiday traditions, the Seroe Preto City of Lights, went dark on Monday evening. The festive event, attended by hundreds, officially signals the end of the holiday mood for many, and heralds in the carnival season.

A volunteer effort by the

Youth Union of Seroe Preto, the stunning lighting display features a different theme each year. The lights go on in mid-December, and admission to walk through this fantasy world and take pictures is free.

On weekends, local bands will perform, bringing out families and neighbors to

share the festive ambiance. The final night of the Seroe Preto light display is Epiphany, or Three King's Day, January 6, which is the end of the Twelve Days of Christmas. The Greek Orthodox celebrate the baptism of Jesus on Epiphany and consider the day to be more important than Christmas. Though it is an official public holiday in the U.S., it is not on Aruba. However, gathering at Seroe Preto to greet friends and wish them well throughout the year, is a beloved tradition on this day. As the evening work on towards midnight, the entire community filled the street of the City of Lights.

This year, TST Band provided the entertainment. As the evening progressed and midnight approached, the music segued from favorite Christmas songs to Carnival favorites, and all welcomed the upcoming season of revelry and pageantry. The first official Carnival 60 event will be this coming Saturday evening in Oranjestad, as the Torch Parade inaugurates the season.

By Rosalie Klein

Obama presses Republicans on jobless benefits

WASHINGTON (AFP) - President Barack Obama made an emotional, moral and economic case for extending long term unemployment benefits on Tuesday, kicking off his first skirmish of the year with Republicans.

The spat over prolonging the lifeline to 1.3 million Americans, among millions more also looking for work, represents the first political test of wills in Washington at the start of a mid-term election year.

"I can't name a time when I met an American who would rather have an unemployment check than the pride of having a job," Obama said, surrounded by people who lost their benefits when Congress failed to act last year.

"The unemployed are not lazy, they are not lacking in motivation, they are coping with the aftermath of the

worst economic crisis in generations," Obama said at the White House.

Moments before the president spoke, in an early sign of the rising political pressure on the issue, the Senate narrowly advanced efforts to provide long term jobless benefits.

The federal government's emergency unemployment compensation program, which extends benefits beyond the 26 weeks provided by most states, expired on December 28, leaving hundreds of thousands of families in the lurch just three days after Christmas.

Most Republicans objected to the \$6.5-billion price tag for the proposed three-month extension, and the lack of a plan to pay for the cost without expanding the national debt.

Continued on pg 6

Peace talks deadline may be extended: Israel minister

JERUSALEM (AFP) - Middle East peace talks could be extended beyond their April deadline, Israel's defence minister said Tuesday, insisting current negotiations were aimed solely at providing a framework for final talks.

The remarks came a day after US Secretary of State John Kerry left following four days of intense meetings with Israeli and Palestinian leaders, during which he failed to broker agreement on a framework to guide the talks forward.

"We are now trying to reach a framework to continue negotiations for a period beyond the nine months some thought would suffice for reaching a permanent accord,"

Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon told reporters during a tour of a military base.

"We are not working on a framework agreement, but on a framework for negotiations, for continuing negotiations for a longer period," Yaalon was quoted as saying in a statement from his office.

Kerry kicked-started nine months of direct peace negotiations in July after a three-year hiatus.

But his latest visit was clouded by bitter recriminations, with leaders on both sides accusing each other of not being serious partners in the search for peace.

According to Israeli media, Kerry was due back in the region next week.

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Aruba represented at Manizales, Colombia **Georgina Martinus representing Aruba at the 'Reinado Internacional del Café 2014'**



ORANJESTAD-- Star promotion is very proud to announce that Aruba is being represented at the beauty pageant in Manizales, Colombia: 'Reinado Internacional del Café 2014.'

Giorgina Martinus Miss Aruba's 2013 2nd finalist arrived in Colombia last Saturday night and has already joined various events organized in connection with the event. A total of 20 candidates are participating at this pageant which is very popular in Latin America. Last

year Aruba classified among the top 5 with Miss Aruba 2012 Larisa Leeuwe participating.

Giorgina shared that the schedule is very hectic in Colombia but she is having a lot of fun and that everyone is very excited about Aruba. Everywhere Aruba's grand Carnaval 60 jubilee is being mentioned. Giorgina also takes advantage of every opportunity to invite everyone to come and visit our beautiful island Aruba. She also wishes to thank

everyone who supported her to be able to compete at this event on January 11th, 2014.

For more info regarding Giorgina's participation please visit Facebook, "Miss Aruba Pageant" or "Send Productionz."

Cas Animal Cont'd **A very promising beginning to 2014!**



This family has two new babies

The Cas Animal Sanctuary and Foundation of Aruba is dedicated to rescuing abandoned and abused dogs off island streets, ideally to be placed in a good home. No matter how badly injured or weakened by disease, Cas An-

imal founder, Kirsten Arndt, has discovered hundreds of times over that with proper medical care, they can be rehabilitated to be a wonderful friend to a loving person.

Cont. on pg 3

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A very promising beginning to 2014!

Cont. from pg 2

Often, their afflictions are only superficial, but rendering them unattractive, which is no reason, in Kirsten's opinion, to deprive them of a happy life and the chance to be a loyal, loving companion.

Kirsten is very happy and optimistic regarding the year 2014. She foresees breaking ground on the full-size sanctuary and clinic on the drawing board, with land promised her by the government years ago. Also, on a very positive note, five adoptions have opened the new year, which is always a great reason to celebrate.

Two of the puppies at the shelter were adopted by Luis and Shomaira of Aruba, and be great companions to their two children. Cas Animal also provides free animal ambulance service for life for the dogs adopted from the shelter. If they are in need of medical attention, shots or neutering and the families that have taken them in have not time or transport to see it done, Cas Animal will ferry them to the veterinary clinic when necessary. There are still more puppies available from the same litter, if anyone else wishes to start of the year be providing a good home.

A visitor from Philadelphia has taken in a third puppy, Aaron, who winged his way to the U.S. on Monday. Two more grown dogs the vacationer found on the streets will be joining him as soon as they are certified as healthy enough to travel. Kirsten hopes this is a harbinger of the year to come, with many more successful adoptions.

Presently, Cas Animal has everything in place to embark on its ultimate mission: the

construction of Aruba's first, strictly no-kill dog shelter. The facility will house close to 300 dogs, plus cats and have an onsite-clinic. It has been designed to run on renewable energy and be wholly sustainable. Until then, Kirsten has converted her home into a temporary sanctuary. Presently, she cares for around 50 dogs she has rescued, with the ever-present hope of placing them in good homes. Whether they are adopted or not, she will continue to care for and love them, despite lost limbs from accidents, or a missing eye. They have a happy life and the companionship they crave. With only a few bureaucratic kinks to iron out, construction should begin early this year.

Anyone who may be interested in adopting a dog can, even if you are not an island resident. Call Kirsten at 742-8732 and she will help you through the process of acquiring the papers and a carrier needed to take home one of our sweet, affectionate cunucu dogs, who make excellent watch dogs, too. As this story demonstrates, this is done regularly and many happy owners find great pleasure in being reminded every day of Aruba by the loving new companion.

The medical and feeding costs of rescued animals is never ending. Those wishing to support Kirsten's work with donations can do so in the form of payment to the Cas Animal Foundation account at the Contreras Veterinary Clinics, call: 587-0917. Donations can be made directly to the foundation's account: Cas Animal Foundation, CMB Bank account # 25762110.

Government to embark on six major projects and construction of school in Noord



ORANJESTAD -- During a recent press conference, the Minister of Infrastructure, Minister Benny Sievinger, elaborated on the government's vision for the next four years. He focused on the various infrastructure projects, such as the renovation and construction of roads and government buildings.

During the past administra-

tion several major renovation projects were successfully completed, to mention: the Maria College, Abraham de Veer School, Paulus School, Cristo Rey, St. Anna School and Mon Plaisir School. In addition, there were a group of schools which were maintained which contributed to an investment of about 30 million Florins.

In the current administration of the Eman Cabinet, they have already prepared a priority list of school buildings to be renovated. The schools mentioned are: Bonifacius School, Arco Iris School, Prinses Amalia Basis School, Antonius College, Colegio Arubano San Nicolaas, and Augustinus College. There are also plans for building a new MAVO/HAVO and VWO school in Noord.

With respect to this project, the government indicated that the drawings are ready and that the department in question is working on the law to go to Parliament for approval. This school building project will commence this year at Seroe Janchi close to the Frans Figaro Sport Complex. This project alone is expected to cost 16 million Florins.

PPV Caiso & Soca Monarch 2014 available now at Early Bird price!



ORANJESTAD -- Fundacion Musica (Music Foundation of Aruba) are organizing the Caiso & Soca Monarch 2014.

The pre-finals will be on February 11, 12 and 13 with the grand final on February

15th 2014.

SETAR Cable Services is making it possible for everyone who cannot assist this event to be still able to view this "live" via Pay per View in the comfort of their own

home.

As a special SETAR is offering this package at an Early Bird price of Af. 85,- which is valid until January 17th, 2014. After this date the package will be sold at its normal price.

The package will include all the pre-final nights and the grand final of the Caiso & Soca Monarch 2014.

Packages are obtainable at all SETAR teleshops and SETAR store. One can also call 5251700.

Sponsors of the Caiso PPV are SETAR, Romar Trading and Aruba Bank.

Exclusive interview with Leonardo DiCaprio

by Hollywood Correspondent to THE MORNING NEWS Noel de Souza



Di Caprio in "The Wolf of Wallstreet"

Aruban cinemas will open on Thursday with the latest feature film of the latest Martin Scorsese film "The Wolf of Wall Street" starring Leonardo DiCaprio. Based on the true story of Jordan Belfort, from his rise to a wealthy stockbroker living the high life, to his fall involving crime, corruption and the federal government, the film has already earned two Golden Globe nominations and a dozen more from other film organizations, including Best Picture and Best Actor for DiCaprio. Some critics have cited it as Scorsese's "finest film since "Goodfella."

"Leo roars like a tiger in the Wolf of Wall Street, in which he plays a hustler seeking to get rich off of other people's money," De Souza writes. "It is a performance that already has Oscar buzz."

NDS: DO YOU THINK THAT PEOPLE IN GENERAL ARE GREEDY?

LDC I have tried to attribute it to a time period of a civilization and you come to realize that greed is inherently a part of life; nothing would survive without opportunism and greed. No species out there would not take over another species if it could not survive. We are all homosapiens, these intelligent life forms, able to progress beyond that and find a way to live in harmony with others without taking advantage. But ultimately, what I learned from the character I play in the film is that I feel guilt for the things that I have done, and yet, when talking to people who were actually ripping people off, many of them got off on taking advantage of these people. It made them happy in a way.

NDS: HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT THAT YOU HAVE ENOUGH MONEY, OR THAT YOU NEED MORE?

LDC: I have seen people play that game, the game of obtaining more and more wealth. If they don't have anything else to fulfill their life, I have met people like that; it motivates them twenty-four hours a day. But often, people like that who I have met don't have a foundation of much else around them that feeds them. Not to say that some of the richest men in the world aren't incredibly healthy, normal peo-

ple, but it's like this addiction to greed that I see constantly, where people just only think about how they can get more and achieve more. So I of course want to be successful, I want to do stuff to a degree to make money, and I think everyone likes to make money, but ultimately, you can't let it be your obsession in life. Otherwise it becomes pretty miserable.

NDS: POWER IS INTOXICATING - LEONARDO, YOU CAN PRETTY WELL GET ANYTHING THAT YOU WISH TO HAVE, THERE ARE ALWAYS 'YES' PEOPLE AROUND YOU. SO HOW DO YOU KEEP FROM GOING EXCESSIVE?

LDC: It is always important to have a balance. If you don't have the right people around you always checking you, and in a lot of ways it is a period that you go through and I remember that when I was young I had a period where I thought that I knew every thing, and a couple of people checked me early on, and then you get the realization that all of this is, in a lot of ways, some imaginary world really, and it's based on art and your achievements in the arts- that is an important thing to remember. Ultimately we are not changing the society, and solving world hunger.

NDS: BUT YOU GET ACCESS TO A LOT OF THINGS THAT OTHER PEOPLE DON'T.

LDC: Yes, my life is completely different than it was ten, fifteen years ago. And that's the nature of the beast, that's what happens. And I

am just grateful to be able to do what I do, what I do honestly. And yes, advantages come with it and so do disadvantages, but I feel incredibly lucky to be where I am, to be able to do the work that I do and have the life that I have.

NDS: YOU WILL BE FORTY YEARS OLD BEFORE LONG, YOU ARE 39 NOW, COULD YOU REFLECT UPON WHAT YOU ARE MOST PROUD OF IN YOUR LIFE, AND WHAT YOU HOPE THAT THE FUTURE WILL HOLD FOR YOU?

LDC: I think a lot about the time when I was sixteen and what has changed as an actor, for me. And I think to be very honest, I am not at all different than I was then as far as the actor that I wanted to become, and the movies that I wanted to do, that's for some reason the same. I am actually surprised, if there is one thing I am proud of as a young man is the choices that I made, I look back and I say, who was this little snot nosed kid that I am proud of, the choices that I made and sticking to my guns. But as an actor I am always trying to get better, be free and take more chances,

I took almost a year off after doing three movies in a row and it's been a luxury to have that time off. I did a lot of environmental work in that time. But I also got to reconnect with me and see what I enjoy. And not have the stress of that thing that I was yearning in me as a sixteen year old boy, which is go out there and achieve, go and be aggressive as you possibly can, and be the most ambitious

actor you possibly can and I am not stopping and I am going to look for another project soon, but it has been good to have the time to reflect and to know that there are other things in life, which are equally interesting and worth my time.

NDS: SO WHAT DID YOU ACTUALLY DO IN YOUR YEAR OFF?

LDC: We did this great auction this year, which was amazing. I worked on it for almost a year while I was filming, it was for Christie's. We, not to brag about it, but I am, made thirty eight million dollars for the environment. We got all these great artists to donate their works, we went to all their studios, and we got the right people in the right room to bid this stuff up. Bono had a great one recently, they earned a lot of money as well, and now this has been a lot about allocating those funds, and we are starting to do it. We have found the projects. I have been traveling a lot and getting into the art world as well.

NDS: YOU HAVE ALLOCATED SOME OF THAT MONEY TOWARDS SAVING THE TIGERS IN NEPAL, COULD YOU TALK ABOUT THAT?

LDC: From the auction we got to do a Hugh grant this year, to create more national parks in Nepal, which is a great wild tiger refuge. There are three thousand tigers left in the wild on planet earth. They are constantly being poached for tiger bone wine, and their pelts. Although the bone of a tiger has no nutri-

tional value, it's proven to be the same as dog bone. But for some reason, their bone is ground up for, basically, erections. We have gotten the opportunity with this new grant to create four new parks with corridors to keep the population healthy, so we have created a new sanctuary in Nepal for them to survive. It is really the World Wildlife Fund that is doing the day to day work of documentation with their cameras stopping the killing. They are promoting anti-poaching, and getting the indigenous communities to be the shepherds of the land and actually participate with them, as opposed to going into the jungle to get firewood and interrupt the habitat of the animals. But the tiger is on top of the food chain, so it really protects the entire region, the rhinos that live under it and everything that lives in these parks. We did one park last year and since then it's given birth to about forty new tigers. I know that does not sound like a lot, but given that there are only three thousand that is considerable.

LDC: TALKING ABOUT SALESMANSHIP, THIS IS WHAT THESE GUYS IN THE WOLF OF WALL STREET DO. HAVE YOU EVER BOUGHT SOMETHING AFTER LISTNING TO AN INFOMERCIAL?

LDC: Oh hell yeah, Weird back scratchers and things like that. Sunglasses where you can see at night and telescopes.

NDS: WHEN YOU SEE A GIRL YOU LIKE, HOW WOULD YOU GO ABOUT GAINING HER LOVE?

Cont. on pg 5



Lunch Buffet
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Dinner
Monday - Sunday
6:00 - 11:00 p.m.

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Exclusive interview with Leonardo DiCaprio

Cont. from pg 4

LDC: I guess you basically have to consistently remain yourself. You have to consistently spend time and not give up. Be yourself because if it ever comes around, you don't want to give a false representation of who you are. And my attitude has always been, if it's meant to be it is meant to be, and if two people like each other, they are going to like each other, there's not much you can do to try and manipulate that.

NDS: WHAT DO YOU SPLURGE ON?

LDC: Jackets. I have too many jackets. I am not big on fancy cars, private planes and things like that. I don't have those things. Art and jackets.

I have a weird thing about jackets- it's like this thing that women have for shoes. I have one that looks exactly like it but the collar is a little bit different, it's a little fluffier, it's a little softer. Looks the same but I've got to have it.

NDS: WHAT IS THE MOST EXPENSIVE THING THAT YOU HAVE EVER PURCHASED AND WHAT KIND OF ART DO YOU COLLECT?

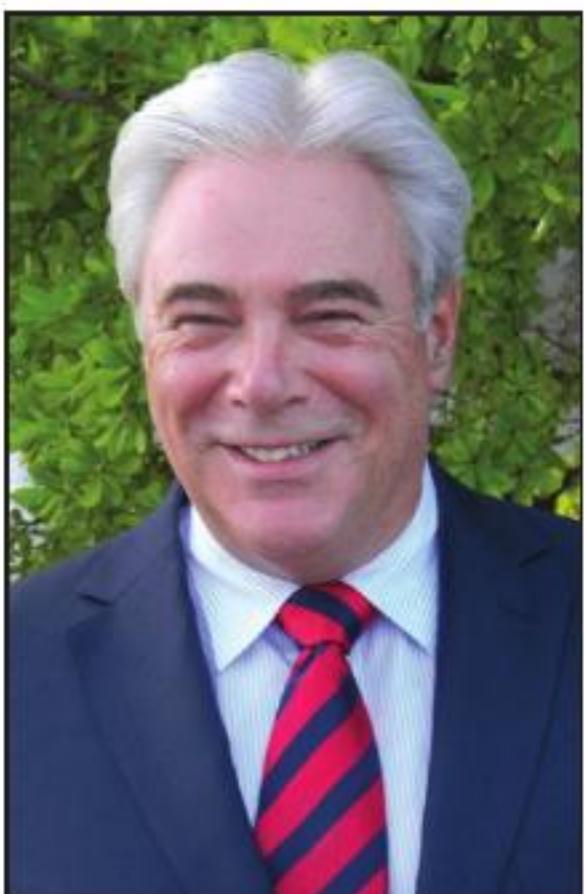
LDC: Well, I collect other stuff too, but the most expensive thing that I ever purchased was a house for my mother. I bought it very early on and then I got her another one that was the most expen-

sive. And as far as the art piece that I got that was expensive, it was an Andy Warhol.

NDS: WHAT DO YOU DO TO KEEP FIT?

I don't do extreme sports anymore, as you know I injured myself so I have sort of a normal regimen, I do some exercise here and there. But I used to do a lot more extreme sports, and there have been many, many times where I have gotten very close to not good situations. The healthiest thing I can do is to just kind of moderately exercise, relax, and don't put myself in situations where I can die. That's basically what I do.

New Advisory services Partner at KPMG in de Dutch Caribbean & Suriname



Ron Wijnstekers

WILLEMSTAD -- KPMG in de Dutch Caribbean & Suriname has expanded its leadership team. Ron Wijnstekers RA was appointed as of January 1 2014 as Managing Director (Advisory Partner) of KPMG Advisory Services

B.V. located in Curaçao. Ron Wijnstekers worked for KPMG Netherlands for over 25 jaar as Partner.

Ron Wijnstekers RA started his career in 1987 at KPMG Netherlands originally with a focus on Public Sector accounts. He was founder of KPMG Management Services (1989) in the Netherlands, which is a successful part of the KPMG NL practice. Also he started KPMG CT (1996), a joint venture of KPMG with Cambridge Technology which is a spin-off from Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where Ron studied. Ron Wijnstekers knows the Dutch Caribbean region rather well, as he is active locally on Curacao and also the other DC islands for quite some time.

Ron Wijnstekers was rather successful in the Netherlands in initiating and leading complex outsourcing projects. He was also responsible from the very beginning of internet for the design and building of internet technology based IT projects for banks, insurance companies in Europe and the US. In the Executive Board of KPMG Netherlands Ron was responsible for years for the innovation portfolio. Also he was member of the Steering Committee of KPMG Europe, Middle East, Africa and India with attention on Public Sector, Healthcare and Infrastructure. Ron held several executive board functions, where he leveraged his talents for the benefit of the community.

"Although I was active since May last year as General Director of an international Italian fashion, retail and real estate conglomerate, the attraction of the blue of Curacao and KPMG brought me back and after considering thoroughly I accepted the offer of the KPMG practice to strengthen the team", said Wijnstekers. "With Ron's vast experience, we think he will be a valued addition to our practice", concluded Lindomar Scoop, Chairman KPMG DC&S.

About KPMG:

KPMG in the Dutch Caribbean & Suriname is a member firm of the KPMG global network of independent firms which include more than 152,000 professionals in 156 countries.

Oil product prices

Department of Economic Affairs, Commerce and Industry



Minister of Economic Affairs, Communication, and Energy announces a change in prices of oil products, as of January 8, 2014:

Gasoline unleaded-premium	219,5 cent p/ltr. (+ 4,4 cent)
Diesel LS	205,8 cent p/ltr. (+ 4,3 cent)
Kerosine	199,9 cent p/ltr. (+ 6,3 cent)

Above mentioned prices includes BBO.

Early Bird Menu



5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Appetizers: Stuffed Avocado, Escargots Bourguignon, (choose one) Fruits of the Seven Seas, Choices of Soups

Entrees:	Breaded Grouper topped with coconut shrimps served with rice and vegetables
	Land & Sea Chicken Breast, Steak & Shrimps with rice and vegetables
	Breaded Chicken Breast served with mushroom sauce, topped with cheese served with vegetables and stuffed potato
	Twin Tenderloin or Chicken Parmesan served on a bed of linguini pasta

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Aruba's Weather Update

VALID TILL WEDNESDAY
AFTERNOON 5:00 PM JANUARY 8,
2014



WEATHER: PARTLY CLOUDY TO MOSTLY SUNNY WITH A CHANCE OF A PASSING SHOWER

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE 30 CENTIGRADE; **MINIMUM TEMPERATURE** 26 CENTIGRADE.

SUNRISE 07:04 AM **SUNSET** 06:30 PM.

WIND: STRONG EASTERN TRADEWINDS AVERAGE 19 KNOTS WITH MAXIMUM OF 30 KNOTS.

GENERAL SITUATION:

FAVORABLE CONDITIONS IN THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE COMBINED WITH LOW LEVEL MOISTURE CAN INDUCE A BRIEF PASSING SHOWER FROM TIME TO TIME.

MARINE CONDITIONS:

WAVE DIRECCION NORTHEAST WITH WAVE-HEIGHTS BETWEEN 7 TO 9 FEET. USE CAUTION OVER OPEN WATERS

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE WEEK:

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Panama offers \$283 mn fund to end canal spat

PANAMA CITY (AFP) - Panama canal officials offered Tuesday to share the burden in a \$283 million fund to end a spat with a consortium threatening to halt the waterway's expansion over huge cost overruns.

The proposal came after two days of intense talks under mediation of a Spanish cabinet minister who flew to Panama City for emergency meetings aimed at preventing a shutdown of the major project.

"If they don't accept the proposal and they don't withdraw the work suspension threat, then we would take the next step to terminate the contract, if necessary," canal administrator Jorge Quijano said after two hours of negotiations with the companies.

The Panama Canal Authority said it was ready to provide \$183 million while the Grupo Unidos por el Canal (GUPC) consortium, led by Spanish builder Sacyr, would have to contribute \$100 million.

The consortium has threatened to suspend the expansion work by January 20 unless Panama pays for \$1.6 billion in extra charges.

The authority's proposal "does not mean that everything is resolved," Quijano said, adding that the GUPC will study the offer but that officials want to find a long-term solution.

The negotiations began

Obama presses Republicans...

Cont. from pg 1

Six Republicans joined majority Democrats in the 60-37 roll call to move to a final vote on the measure which could come later this week.

But the bill faces a tough battle in the Republican-led House of Representatives.

Obama argued that there was a strong moral case to extending the benefits, saying that anyone could find themselves out of work and out of luck, and requiring government help to get back on their feet.

But he also said that the money for jobless benefits would be directly injected back into the economy and would help spur economic growth.

"Letting unemployment insurance expire for millions of Americans is wrong. Congress should make things right," Obama said.

Senator Dean Heller, from the state of Nevada which leads the nation in unemploy-

after Spanish Public Works Minister Ana Pastor held separate meetings on Monday with Panamanian President Ricardo Martinelli, company executives and canal officials.

The GUPC, which includes Impregilo of Italy, Belgium's Jan de Nul and Constructora Urbana of Panama, agreed to negotiate with the canal authority within the contract.

The already delayed project aims to make the 80-kilometer (50-mile) waterway, which handles five percent of global maritime trade, big enough to handle new, giant cargo ships that can carry 12,000 containers.

GUPC has a \$3.2 billion contract to build a third set of locks for the century-old canal, which currently welcomes ships that carry up to 5,000 containers.

The work began in 2009 and was supposed to conclude this year, but it is nine months behind schedule and is now expected to be finished in June 2015.

But GUPC says it ran into unforeseen costs because the canal authority gave the builders the wrong information regarding the area's geology.

The canal authority has countered that the contractor's claims "lack any foundation" and that GUPC must make its complaint in the legal bodies outlined in the contract.

JPMorgan to pay \$2.6 bn for role in Madoff Ponzi fraud

NEW YORK (AFP) - JPMorgan Chase will pay \$2.6 billion to resolve charges that its lax oversight enabled the multibillion-dollar Ponzi scheme of Bernard Madoff, which collapsed spectacularly in 2008.

The amount, part of a US settlement deal over criminal charges, comprises \$2.24 billion destined for victims of the Madoff scam and another \$350 million in penalties to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

The \$2.24 billion includes a \$1.7 billion settlement to be paid to victims through the Justice Department, the largest penalty ever for a violation of the Bank Secrecy Act.

In addition, \$543 million will be paid to the trustee seeking to recover \$17.5 billion in principal that Madoff Securities clients lost in the

scam. So far the trustee has recovered about \$9.8 billion, including the JPMorgan payment.

The cases spotlighted JPMorgan's role as Madoff's main bank in the largest financial fraud to rock Wall Street.

Over more than two decades, some 4,000 clients entrusted Madoff with billions of dollars to manage. Instead of investing the money, he moved it in and out of the JPMorgan accounts, and reported to his clients huge, ultimately illusory gains.

Bank staff harbored suspicions of Madoff's activities dating back to at least 1994, yet never alerted JPMorgan anti-money laundering staff or regulators about their concerns.

"For decades, Bernie Madoff was able to launder

billions of Ponzi proceeds essentially through a single set of accounts at JPMorgan," said US Attorney Preet Bharara. "The bank repeatedly ignored warning signs."

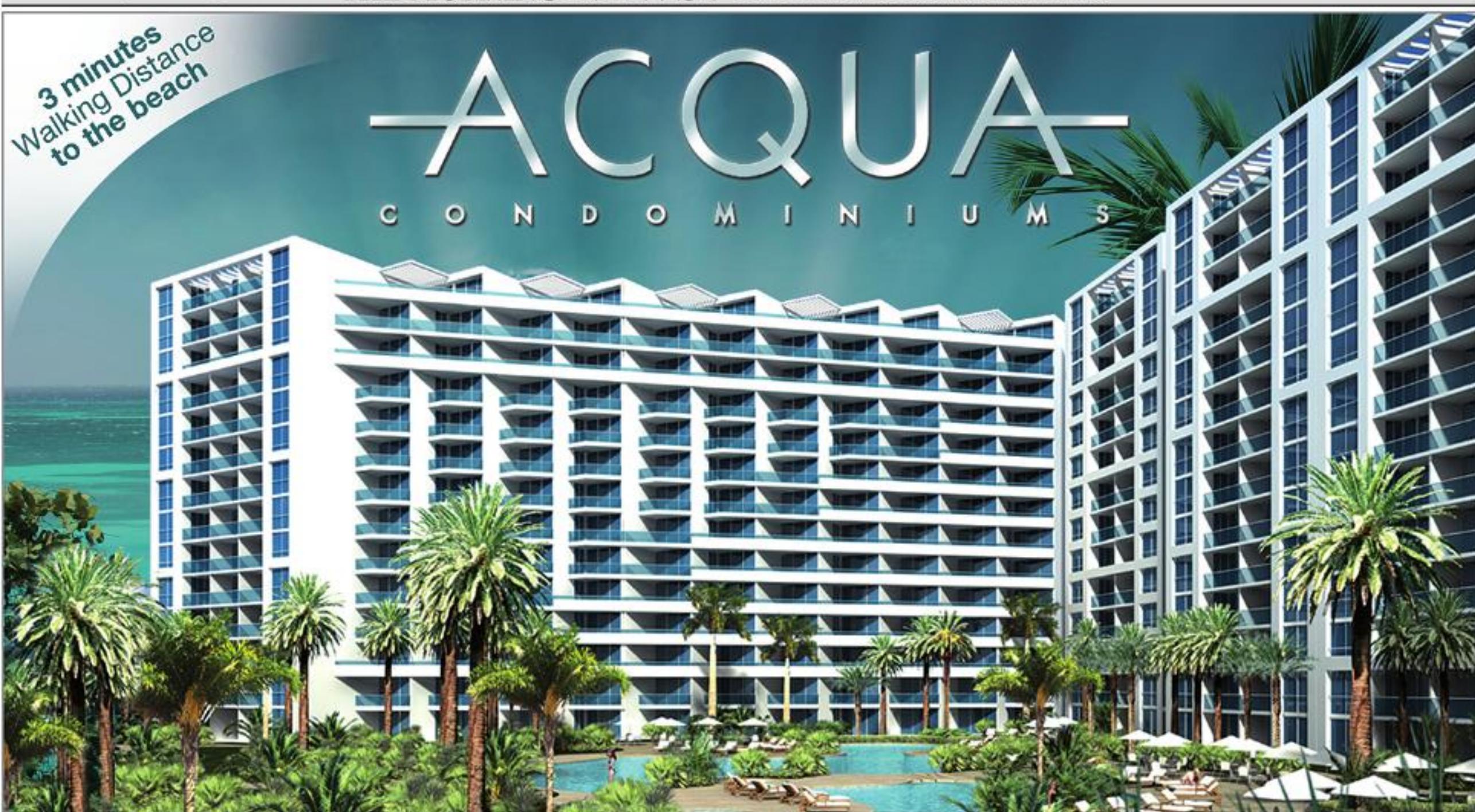
Once a prominent Wall Street broker and chairman of the Nasdaq exchange, Madoff was arrested in December 2008 for fabricating account statements for tens of billions of dollars he managed.

His firm, Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities, collapsed with just \$300 million in assets, after having reported \$65 billion. The savings of many investors, foundations and families were wiped out in the collapse, and efforts continue to claw them back.

After admitting that his firm was a Ponzi scheme, Madoff was sentenced to 150 years in prison.

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Poland unveils plan to fight drunk driving



WARSAW (AFP) - Poland's government on Tuesday unveiled a plan to fight driving under the influence, after a drunk driver killed six pedestrians on New Year's Day.

Poland has one of the worst road safety ratings in the 28-member European Union, and reckless and drunk driving are part of the problem.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk told reporters his government would like to toughen the penalties for drunk driving. He said he expected the

changes to clear parliament and enter into force by early next year.

The police stop hundreds of drunk drivers every weekend in Poland, where the limit for drivers is 0.2 grammes of alcohol per litre of blood.

At the moment most drunk drivers receive suspended sentences if caught, and the government would like to see more of them -- especially the repeat offenders -- sent to jail.

It also proposes to up the minimum fine for driving

under influence, as well as the minimum amount of time for which a driver's licence is confiscated, Tusk said.

He added that all cars should be equipped with breathalyzer tests starting next year.

The government's proposals come after a man lost control of his vehicle and careened into pedestrians on January 1 in northern Poland. Six people died, including one child.

Tests on the driver revealed he had two grammes of alcohol per litre of blood. He faces 12 years behind bars.



Italy rapped for forcing kids to take father's surname

STRASBOURG (AFP) - Italy on Tuesday lost a long battle to hold on to one of its ancient family traditions: requiring children of married couples to take the father's surname only.

An Italian law excluding offspring from having the option to be registered under the mother's maiden name was "patriarchal", "discriminatory" and a rights violation, the European Court of Human Rights ruled, ordering it be ended.

The patronymic practice constituted a "difference of treatment between men and women," the Strasbourg-based court said in its judgement.

In doing so, it sided with an Italian couple who have fought for 13 years to have their children carry the wife's maiden name, rather than the husband's last name.

Alessandra Cusan and Luigi Fazzo had taken their case to the top European court after losing all their battles in Italy's courts to have their daughter born in 1999 named Maddalena Cusan instead of Maddalena Fazzo, as authorities

required. They also wanted Cusan to be the surname of their two subsequent children.

The requirement they stick to the father's surname was an infringement of their private lives, they argued.

They won a half-victory at the end of 2012 by gaining permission from local authorities to add the mother's name to that of the father's for Maddalena, but that was not sufficient and they took the issue to the European rights court.

While recognising that Italy's legal tradition had its roots in a practice dating back to the ancient Roman era, the court said it was today incompatible with the Italian constitution's principle of gender equality.

Rome will now have to change its legislation to comply with the ruling, unless it lodges an appeal with a higher chamber in the European court within three months.

Several Italian lawmakers, from across the political spectrum, also hailed the judgement as a boost for gender parity.

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Risk of dying from cancer down 20 percent: US study

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The risk of dying from cancer in the United States has declined 20 percent over the past two decades, according to the American Cancer Society's annual report out Tuesday.

However, cancer, a complex disease that has largely eluded attempts at a cure, will remain a top killer in 2014, taking some 1,600 US lives per day, it warned.

The group's yearly report is based on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Cancer Institute and the National Center for Health Statistics.

The most common cancers for women are breast, lung and colon cancer, while in men they are prostate, lung and colon cancer, it said.

Breast cancer is expected to account for 29 percent of new cancers in women.

Lung cancer remains the most lethal, and is responsible for one in four cancer deaths among men and women combined.

The declining popularity of smoking among US adults is the main reason why cancer deaths are going down, said William Oh, chief of medical oncology at Mount Sinai hospital in New York.

"A big part of this decrease in mortality is certainly linked to the decrease in cigarette smoking because we know that lung cancer is such

Stop Cancer - Knowledge is power

a lethal disease that once you have it, very often you will die of it," Oh told AFP.

People are also being diagnosed sooner and receiving better treatments today than 20 years ago, said Oh, who was not involved in the study.

The report predicts there will be 1,665,540 new cancer cases and 585,720 cancer deaths in the United States in 2014.

Over the past 20 years, cancer death rates have continually declined, avoiding more than 1.3 million deaths from 1991 to 2010.

The combined cancer death rate registered at 215.1 per 100,000 in 1991 but fell to 171.8 per 100,000 in 2010.

More men's lives have been saved (952,700) than women's (387,700) over that time span.

Women are still getting cancer at about the same rate, at least over the past five years for which data are available (2006-2010), while in men cancer incidence has declined 0.6 percent per year.

Cancer death rates have fallen 1.8 percent per year in men and 1.4 percent in women over those five years.

But while advances have been made in treatment and diagnosis, the complexity of

tumors and how they develop in different parts of the body continues to thwart the most expert bids to eradicate cancer.

"One of the key issues around cancer is it is not just one disease. It is truly multiple diseases," Oh said.

"It makes it hard to find one drug that will treat every single person with lung cancer, or one treatment that will work in every single person with breast cancer."

The report said the greatest success against cancer has been seen in African-American men aged 40 to 49, with a 55 percent decline in cancer death rates from 1991 to 2010.

"The halving of the risk of cancer death among middle aged black men in just two decades is extraordinary," said John Seffrin, chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society.

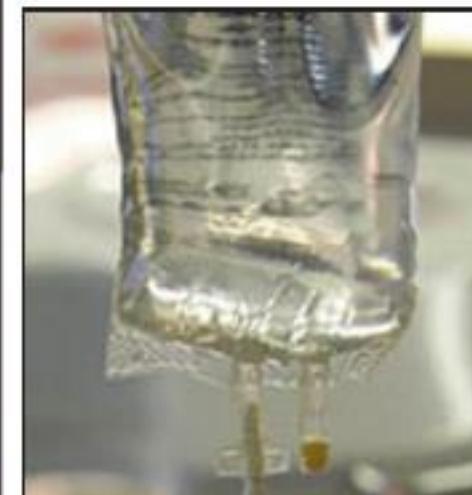
"But it is immediately tempered by the knowledge that death rates are still higher among black men than white men for nearly every major cancer and for all cancers combined."

Stephanie Bernik, chief of surgical oncology at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York, described the report's findings as "welcome news."

"We have made great strides in gaining knowledge as to how cancer starts and how it can be prevented and treated," she said in an email to AFP.

"Obviously, more work needs to be done, but the decreasing rate of cancer is an encouraging sign that we are heading in the right direction."

New bacteria found in IV nutrient bags that caused French baby deaths



PARIS (AFP) - France's Pasteur Institut said Tuesday a new type of bacteria had been found in nutrient bags used by a hospital in the Alps to feed babies intravenously and thought to be responsible for three deaths.

The findings came after the parents of the three newborns, who died on separate days in early December, filed criminal complaints for manslaughter against the hospital in the town of Chambery in southeast France.

Analyses of several unused

IV bags from the batch used to give the newborns nutrients while in the hospital's neonatal intensive care ward showed they all contained bacteria.

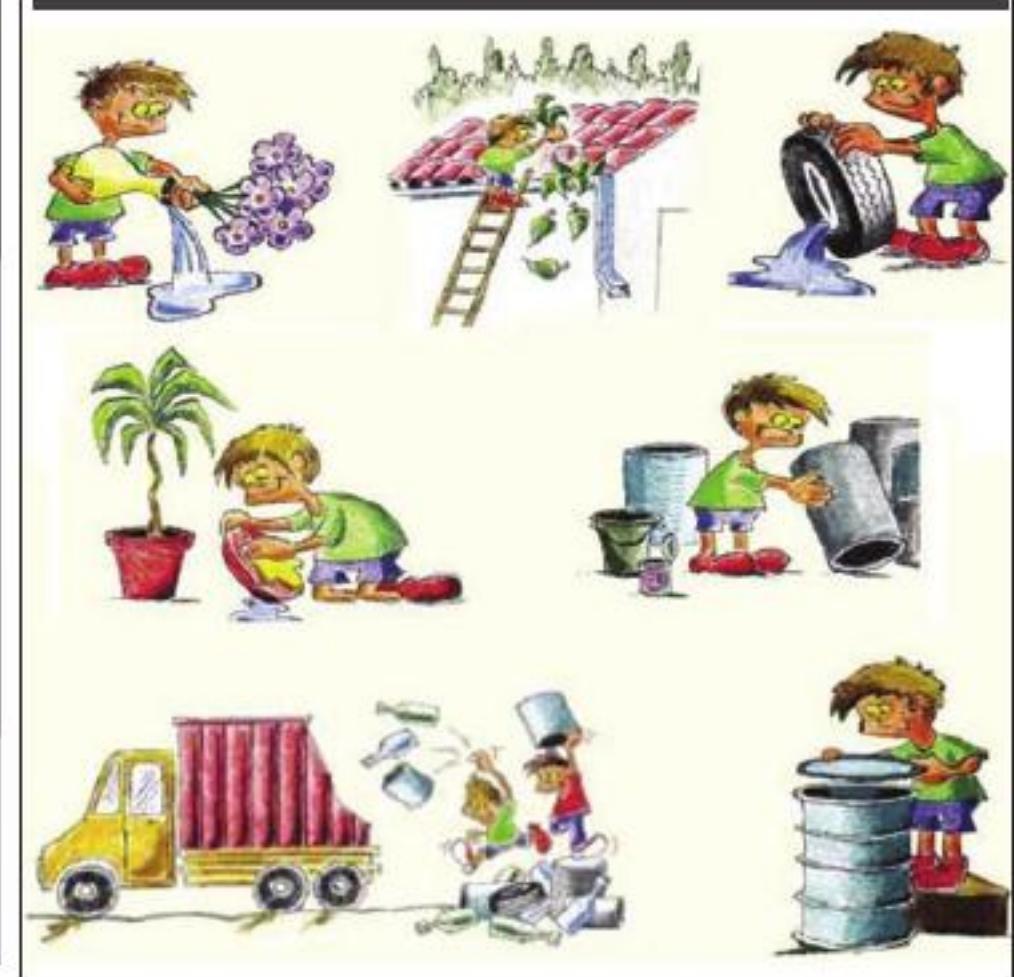
Tests showed it was a "type of environmental enterobacteria that was unknown until now and has no name," said Jean-Claude Manuguerra from the Pasteur Institut.

France's health minister, Marisol Touraine, said Tuesday that six of the IV bags showed the presence of a "a single and similar germ of an environmental origin" but did not give details.

Tests had been conducted on a total of 10 pouches. Marisol said the "place or method of contamination" was not yet clear.

A total of 137 nutrient pouches produced by French firm laboratoire Marette on November 28 and distributed to seven hospitals have been recalled following the deaths.

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Former Miss Venezuela, partner shot dead



CARACAS (AFP) - A former Miss Venezuela and her British-born partner were shot dead while their five-year-old daughter was wounded during a suspected roadside robbery that shocked the nation, authorities said Tuesday. Monica Spear, a 29-year-old soap opera star, and Thomas Henry Berry, 39, were killed after their car broke down on a highway in northwestern Venezuela late Monday, prosecutors said in statement. Their daughter, Maya Berry Spear, was wounded in the right leg but stable after receiving medical treatment in an assault that put a spotlight on the country's soaring murder rate. Five people have been detained and are being interrogated in connection with the crime, Interior Minister Miguel Rodriguez said after a televised meeting with President Nicolas Maduro. Spear, who was a quarter-finalist in the 2005 Miss Universe contest, appeared in the Miami-based Telemundo series "Pasion Prohibida" ("Forbidden Passion") and "Flor Salvaje" ("Savage Flower"). Venezuela has one of the world's highest murder rates, with 79 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants in 2013, according to the non-profit Venezuelan Observatory of Violence.



WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA (AFP) - (L-R) Bono, Director Jim Sheridan and The Edge attend The Weinstein Company Hosts A Private Party With U2 In Support Of Their Original Song "Ordinary Love" From "MANDELA: LONG WALK TO FREEDOM" at Sunset Marquis Hotel & Villas on January 6, 2014 in West Hollywood, California.

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US duo releases first-ever N.Korea rap video

WASHINGTON (AFP) - What's likely the first rap video ever made in North Korea went online Tuesday to the delight of the young and ambitious Washington hiphop duo that created it.

Pacman and Peso posted "Escape to North Korea" on their YouTube site on the eve of the 31st birthday of the communist state's supreme leader Kim Jong-Un.

"We shot a great music video and did something nobody has done so I feel great about it," said Pacman through his manager.

Following in the footsteps of basketball star Dennis Rodman, who's in Pyongyang this week, Anthony Bobb (Pacman) and Dontray Ennis (Peso) traveled halfway around the world in November to shoot their video on the streets of the North Korea capital.

By doing so, with financial help from Kickstarter contributors and a New York hedge fund manager, the dreadlocked rappers hoped to set themselves apart in Washington's homegrown hip hop scene.

Their trip coincided with North Korea's month-long detention of 85-year-old Korean War veteran Merrill Newman, but Pacman, 19, and Peso, 20, said they personally experi-

enced no problems.

"We learned about their leaders and why they have problems with America," Peso said. "All the Koreans we met were cool... It was all love over there. It wasn't how what people was saying it would be."

The US government does

not prohibit Americans from visiting North Korea despite Pyongyang's human rights record and a nuclear program widely seen as a threat to East Asian regional security.

Online :
<http://www.youtube.com/user/FHTMG?feature=watch>

'SNL' fills diversity gap with NY comedienne



NEW YORK (AFP) - "Saturday Night Live" has picked a New York-based stand-up comedienne as its first black female cast member since 2007, as it aims to put a flap over its lack of racial and gender diversity behind it. Sasheer Zamata will make her debut appearance on the popular weekend comedy sketch show on January 18, said NBC television in a statement. She'll be a featured player -- one of the younger second-tier cast members who typically appear less often than the repertory actors who get top billing on the show. Executive producer Lorne Michaels had auditioned several candidates, amid a furor over the lingering absence of African-American women on "SNL" after the show this season added six new cast members, all of them white.

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State of emergency due to 'Polar vortex' winter storm - Much of the United States has plunged into a deep freeze from record low temperatures.



AFP - Mist rises from Lake Michigan as temperatures dipped well below zero in Chicago, Illinois.



AFP - A person takes a picture along the shore of Lake Michigan as temperatures remain in the negative digits on January 7, 2014 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A 'polar vortex' of frigid air centered on the North Pole dropped temperatures to the negative double digits at its worst.

What is a polar vortex? What distinguishes it?
The polar vortex, as it sounds, is circulation of strong, upper-level winds that normally surround the northern pole in a counterclockwise direction -- a polar low-pressure system. These winds tend to keep the bitter cold air locked in the Arctic regions of the Northern Hemisphere. It is not a single storm. On occasion, this vortex can become distorted and dip much farther south than you would normally find it, allowing cold air to spill southward.

Sony unveils game service as PS4 sales top 4.2 million

LAS VEGAS (AFP) - Sony on Tuesday announced a hotly-anticipated streaming game service along with the news that it sold more than 4.2 million PlayStation 4 consoles by the start of this year.

PlayStation Now, set to begin a test phase this month and launch in the United States mid-year, promised to let gamers access blockbuster titles in the Internet "cloud" and play them on an array of devices intended to expand over time.

The new streaming game service will provide PlayStation gamers access to games they love from prior generation consoles and grow to extend play to other Internet linked devices such as smartphones and tablets, according to Sony Computer Entertainment president Andrew House.

A lament of gamers shifting to new-generation consoles is that the devices don't play games tailored for earlier models. Sony's service will begin by providing hit titles for play on PS4 and PS3 consoles, and then the Japanese entertainment titan's handheld Vita game devices.

"We are thrilled to deliver entertainment experiences only possible from PlayStation through our new streaming game service," said House.

Sony was demonstrating the service on some Bravia smart television models at its booth

at the Consumer Electronics Show, which will continue here through Friday.

The goal of the service is to let people "play where ever they want, when ever they want" and incorporates technology from cloud gaming company Gaikai, which Sony bought in 2012 for \$380 million.

Gamers will be able to rent titles at PlayStation Now or pay for monthly subscriptions to the service, according to House.

House updated PlayStation 4 sales figures to say that 4.2 million consoles had been sold as of December 28 of last year. Sony launched the PS4 in on November 15.

Sony Entertainment Network will begin testing later this year a cloud-based television service in the United States, according to House.

The service will combine popular live television programs with a large library of on-demand content, according to Sony. Shows or films will stream to an array of devices, including tablets or smartphones made by competitors.

House heralded the new television service as a natural evolution of Sony's moves to combine strengths in entertainment, gaming and consumer electronics.

Pricing details for the gaming and television services were not revealed.

Wave sweeps three family members out to sea in Spain

MADRID (AFP) - Rescuers found the body of a man Tuesday on Spain's northwestern coast where three members of the same family were swept out to sea by a huge wave while reportedly scattering the ashes of a dead relative.

Police found the body on a beach on the rocky coast of Valdovino in Galicia, police said in a message on their Twitter account.

Spanish media said the man was a 67-year-old who was swept out to sea along with his niece and his brother-in-law on Monday while they were standing on a cliff.

Private television station Telecinco said they had gone to scatter the ashes of a dead relative and were caught up by a huge wave during a storm.

Two helicopters searched on Tuesday the coast of Galicia, which continued to be lashed by strong winds and waves as high as 12 metres (40 feet).

Website airs video of beheaded inmates in Brazil jail

BRASILIA (AFP) - A gruesome video showing three beheaded inmates in a northeastern Brazilian jail hit by rampant gang violence was aired Tuesday on the website of the daily Folha de Sao Paulo.

The pictures were filmed on December 17 by other prisoners following a mutiny resulting from a clash between two rival gangs in the penitentiary in Sao Luis, capital of Maranhao state, the daily said.

Shown were the bodies of three inmates lying in a pool of blood, including two with their heads completely cut off and the third with the head hanging.

All three had various stab wounds and burns on the torso.

Folha said it received the video from the union representing prison workers in Maranhao.

Gang violence in the overcrowded Pedrinhas facility, which was built for 1,700 inmates but houses 2,500, was detailed in an official probe that concluded that the state of Maranhao was incapable of maintaining order inside.



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Domestic workers could leave black economy with 'service cheques'

THE HAGUE - Around 400,000 household workers could be taken out of the black economy if the Netherlands introduced 'service cheques', similar to the system used in Belgium and France, the Volkskrant reports on Tuesday.

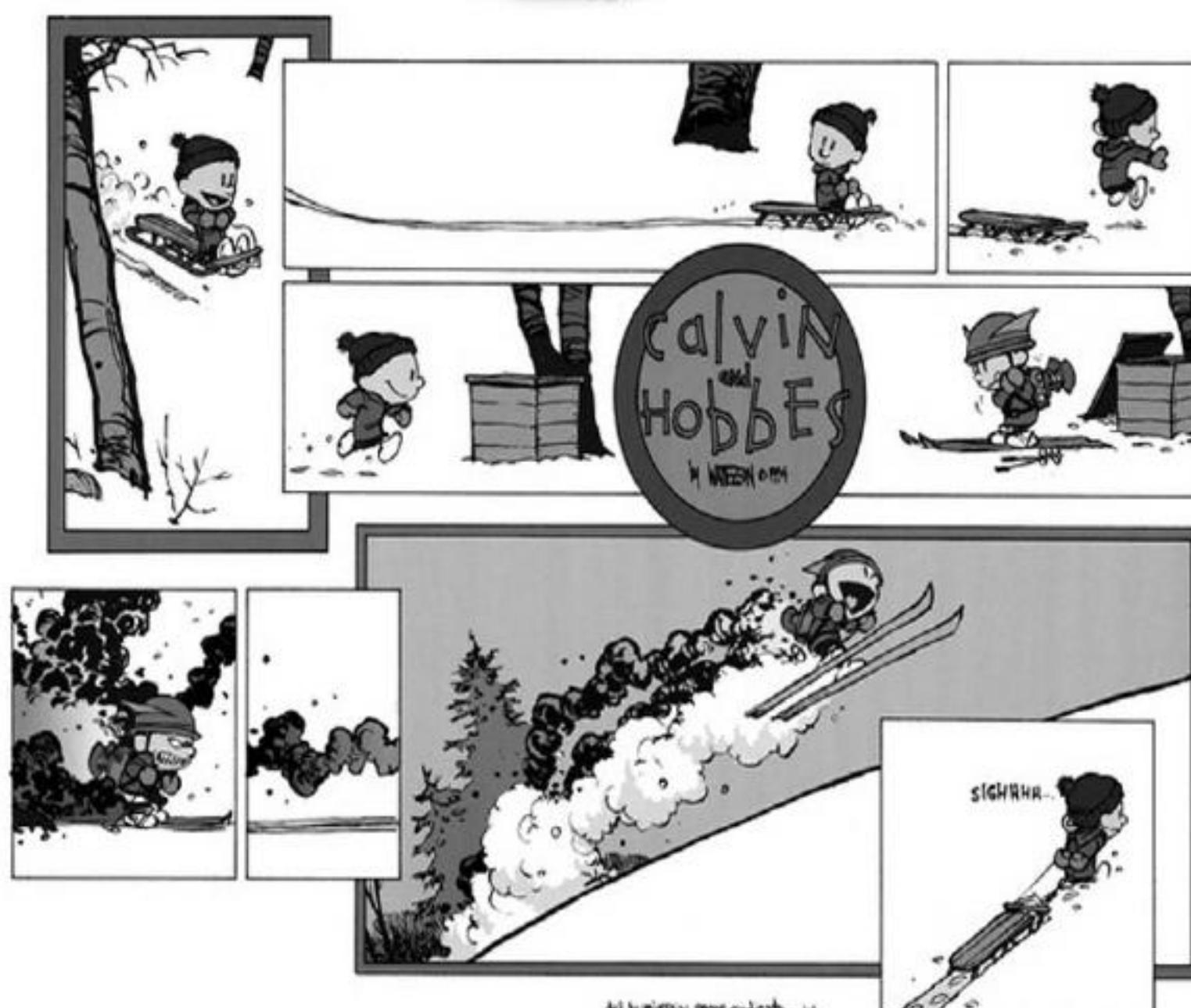
The suggestion comes from trade union FNV and cleaning sector organisation OSB and aims to ensure domestic workers get paid properly and pay tax.

'Service cheques' would be bought from cleaning firms by people using home helps for

€12.50 each and given to workers at the rate of one for each hour worked. The cheques would be handed in to the cleaning firm which would add a government subsidy of €7.50 to each cheque to cover the worker for tax, social premiums and insurance.

Introducing the new system would cost the government between €300m and €800m a year, but would ensure domestic workers are covered for pensions, unemployment and illness, the union and OSB say.

COMICS



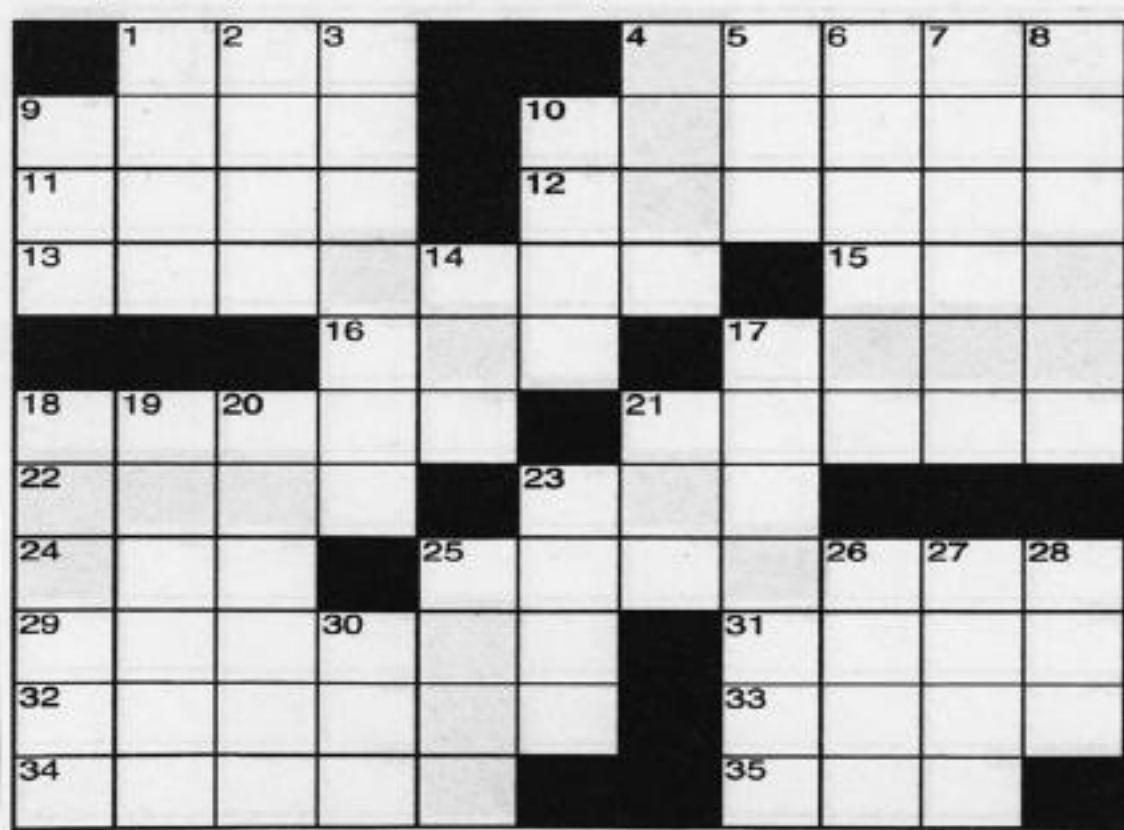
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- 1 Animation collectible
- 4 Drink like a dog (2 wds.)
- 9 Artist Salvador
- 10 Breakfast cereal
- 11 Emerald Isle
- 12 Corners
- 13 Flabby
- 15 Nero's language (abbr.)

- 16 Hockey's Bobby
- 17 Lawyer's concern
- 18 Singer Furtado
- 21 Hannah of "Splash"
- 22 Shortly
- 23 Republican party (abbr.)
- 24 "Harper Valley ___"
- 25 Distinctly
- 29 Ignite
- 31 Frothy



beverage
32 Delivery person, once

33 Highlands gal
34 Cheeky
35 "Oz" aunt et al.

DOWN
1 Poet Sandburg
2 Director Kazan
3 Man on a penny
4 Earth's surface

5 Evita's country (abbr.)

6 Column
7 Restless
8 Pale color
9 Letters on a phone's #3 button

10 Passable
14 Shout
17 Competent
18 Diner's lap covering
19 Lure
20 Courtesy car
21 Bambi's mom, e.g.
23 Singer Campbell
25 Sculptor's medium
26 Paper quantity
27 Subtraction word

28 Decade segments (abbr.)
30 Drivers license issuers (abbr.)

SOLUTION

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7	6	5	4	3	9	8	5	7

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In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

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5	3	4						1
1			3				4	
8			1		5			6
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9					4	5	7	

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the ac-



tion, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway, we are very pleased by the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of

Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great

demand for Aruba and facilities such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the least is the future value of the

investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.

Discover authentic Aruban cuisine at The Queen's



Enjoy a true taste of Aruba without having to travel in the charming surroundings of The Queen's Restaurant in the Palm Beach Plaza Mall. Your host, Varella Innocencia has brought her very popular Oranjestad eatery to Palm Beach, showcasing authentic local cuisine only a short walk away from the major resorts.

The "hipper" and elegant new digs offer beautiful views, but Mama Luisa's magical touch in the kitchen is what

first won this charming eatery their loyal clientele. She can be counted on to be conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations. As Varella says, "My mom loves and lives to cook. Even when she is not at work in the restaurant, she is experimenting with new dishes all day at home."

She is the Queen of the Kitchen."

Be sure to try Luisa's acclaimed "Carni Stoba di Ma-

machi"- "Grandma's Beef Stew," or their fresh, whole snapper, with Mama Luisa's delectable salsa criollo. Don't miss the specialty of the house, a favorite local delicacy, Keshi Yena - "Filled Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all encased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It is satisfying and particularly memorable. Regional side dishes and some of Mama's secret recipe prepara-

tion of banana hassa and creamy potatoes provide a deliciously picturesque meal.

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food, without a doubt, this is the way to go, reasonably priced and easily accessible. A full menu can be seen on their website, <http://www.thequeensaruba.com/>

Aside from an extensive regular menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season, and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't be shy about asking for something that may not be on the menu, as they are always eager to please.

The Queen's is open daily from 3:00 pm - 11:00 pm, offering both indoor and outdoor dining.

Olympics: US skiers take extra Sochi security measures

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US ski and snowboard teams have a private crisis response team ready to assist with evacuation from the Sochi Winter Olympics in case of emergencies, USA Today reported Tuesday.

The report said Global Rescue, a Boston-based firm that has worked with the US ski and snowboard teams since the 2006 Turin Winter Games, has up to five aircraft standing by to help evacuate Americans in case of a security or medical emergency.

"This environment is unique," Global Rescue chief executive Dan Richards told the newspaper. "You just don't have competitions in places like Sochi with any frequency... in the last 10 years there has been nothing like it."

Russian authorities provide security during the Olympics but the US government also provides security for the American delegation.

The news comes in the wake of two suicide bombings last



week at transportation areas about 500 miles from Sochi and adds to security concerns over the event.

Richards said one plane could take about 200 people out of the Sochi region if needed. The company plans to assist about 375 athletes, guests and staff members.

And Lindsey Vonn's decision Tuesday to end her bid to compete at Sochi does not alter the security plan, a Global Rescue spokeswoman told the newspaper.

US Olympic Committee spokesman Mark Jones told

USA Today that the group had not sought extra private security measures such as those undertaken by the ski and snowboard teams, whose members include ski star Bode Miller and snowboard icon Shaun White.

"The Russians are doing everything that can reasonably be done," Richards said.

The Sochi Winter Olympics, he said, have "got the possibility for there to be some kind of event, though we don't expect there to be. We're really there to help and act as enablers."

Football: Brazil prepared 'too late' for World Cup, blasts Blatter

PARIS (AFP) - Brazil's continuing struggles to keep their World Cup organisation on schedule are a consequence of starting preparations too late, FIFA president Sepp Blatter said Sunday.

"Brazil has come to realise that they started too late. They are the country who are the most delayed (in terms of World Cup organisation) since I have been at FIFA," Blatter told Swiss newspaper 24 Hours.

"Yet they are the only coun-

try who have had such a long time -- seven years -- to prepare."

The World Cup will be staged from June 12 to July 13, but the build-up has been plagued by construction delays, spiralling costs as well as civil discontent at the money being spent on the tournament as well as the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Last year's Confederations Cup, a dress rehearsal for the World Cup, was plagued by angry demonstrations, but

Blatter believes this year's showpiece should pass off relatively peacefully.

"I am an optimist, not a pessimist. Football will be protected. I believe that Brazilians will not attack football directly. This is the sport's home, it's a religion," he said.

"But we know there will be new demonstrations, protests. Last year, they were born of social networks. There was no goal, but at the World Cup they will be more directed, more structured."



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Alpine Skiing: Downhill queen Vonn to miss Sochi Winter Olympics



PARIS (AFP) - American ski champion Lindsey Vonn is to miss next month's Sochi Winter Olympics due to a right knee injury she sustained nearly a year ago, she announced on Tuesday. "I am devastated to announce that I will not be competing in Sochi," Vonn said on her Facebook page. The 29-year-old Vonn, who has 59 World Cup race victories to her credit and who is the reigning Olympic downhill champion, badly injured the knee while competing in a super-G at the World Championships in February. Vonn said that she would compete in just one or two races before the Winter Olympics got underway in the Russian ski resort of Sochi on February 7. Her absence will deprive the Games of one of the biggest stars and draws in winter sport. file photo: Lindsey Vonn with boyfriend US golfer Tiger Woods after she crashed out of the women's downhill race at the FIS Alpine Skiing World Cup in Val d'Isere in the French Alps on December 21, 2013.

Football: Dutch midfielder Maduro joins PAOK



THESSALONIKI (AFP) - Dutch international midfielder Hedwiges Maduro has signed a two-and-a-half year deal to join PAOK from Spaniards Sevilla, the Greek Super League club announced Monday. The 28-year-old, who moves for an undisclosed fee, has played 22 times for the Netherlands, mostly as a defensive midfielder. Having started his career at Ajax, where he won two Dutch Cups, he moved on to Valencia in 2008, winning the Spanish Cup that same year, and then transferred to Sevilla four years later. He made his international debut in a World Cup qualifier against Romania in 2005 and he was part of the Dutch World Cup squad the next year, although he saw only four minutes of action at the finals in Germany.

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Baseball: Ex-Braves hurlers Maddux, Glavine among Hall contenders



Longtime Braves pitchers Tom Glavine, left, and Greg Maddux, right, with John Smoltz, center.

NEW YORK (AFP) - Former Atlanta Braves pitchers Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine,

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each a 300-game winner, are among a host of contenders to be voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame on Wednesday.

Balloting by a media panel of about 550 people will determine those who will be enshrined at ceremonies on July 26-27 at Cooperstown, New York, with the results announced Wednesday afternoon.

Players must be named on 75 percent of ballots to be inducted.

Last year, no one was elected by the panel into the sporting shrine but this year already has three top managers from selection by the expansion era committee last month -- former Atlanta bench boss Bobby Cox plus Joe Torre and Tony La Russa.

"I'm certainly looking forward to it," Cox said last month. "No matter who the writers are going to vote in, it's going to be just tremendous. It's an honor for me to say I'm going to be a part of that."

Maddux and Glavine could become the first duo to crack the Hall of Fame lineup in their first year of eligibility

since Tony Gwynn and Cal Ripken Jr in 2007.

The only two pitchers elected together in their first opportunities were legends Walter Johnson and Christy Mathewson in the inaugural Hall of Fame group in 1936, with such icons of the sport as Babe Ruth and Ty Cobb and Honus Wagner.

Other first-timers include sluggers Frank Thomas and Jeff Kent and pitcher Mike Mussina. There have not been three first-timers inducted at once since 1999 when Nolan Ryan, George Brett and Robin Yount were elected.

Craig Biggio topped last year's vote-getters with his name on 68.2 percent of ballots and will try to reach the 75 percent threshold in his second opportunity.

Maddux and Glavine were managed by Cox on the 1995 Braves team that won the World Series crown over Cleveland. Maddux retired with 355 wins, including 194 over 11 seasons with Atlanta. Glavine won 305 games and 244 over 17 years with the Braves.

NBA: Grizzlies, Celtics, Thunder complete trade deal

BOSTON (AFP) - Jerryd Bayless joined the Boston Celtics from the Memphis Grizzlies on Tuesday as part of the three-team NBA trade deal that also included the Oklahoma City Thunder.

The move saw the Grizzlies obtain guard Courtney Lee and a second-round pick in the 2016 NBA draft from the Celtics in exchange for adding Bayless to the backcourt.

Also as part of the swap, the Grizzlies sent a second-round draft pick to Oklahoma City in exchange for the Thunder sending forward Ryan Gomes to Boston, where he was then released in a salary cap move.

Bayless, 25, has averaged 8.0 points, 1.9 rebounds and 2.1 assists with the Grizzlies this season. He has career averages of 8.3 points, 1.9 rebounds and 2.8 assists with Portland, New Orleans, Toronto and Memphis.

Lee averaged 7.4 points, 1.6 rebounds and 1.1 assists off the Boston bench this season and has career averages of 9.4 points, 2.6 rebounds and 1.5 assists with Orlando, New Jersey, Houston and Boston.

Gomes, an eight-year veteran, has played only 34 minutes over five games for the Thunder this season, scoring six points and grabbing four rebounds.

NBA: Britain's Deng traded from Bulls to Cavaliers

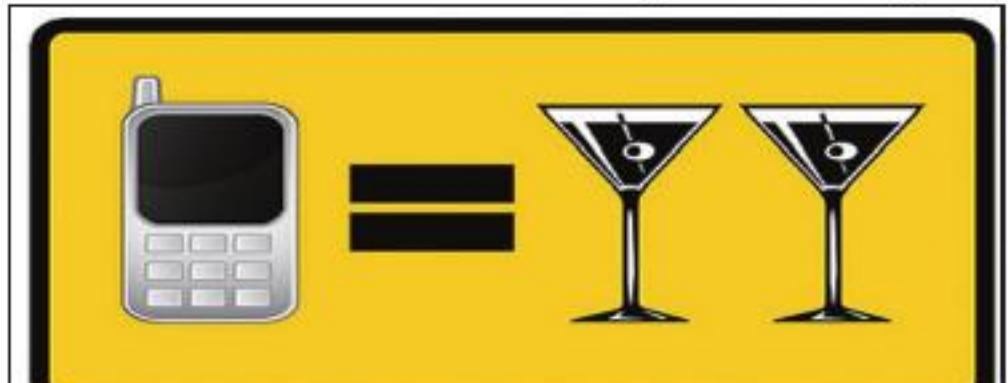
CLEVELAND (AFP) - Britain's Luol Deng, an NBA All-Star forward, was traded by the Chicago Bulls to the Cleveland Cavaliers on Tuesday in a deal for Andrew Bynum and draft picks, the teams announced.

Deng, a 28-year-old play-maker born in what is now South Sudan, has averaged a career-best 19.0 points in 23 starts for the Bulls this season, also grabbing 6.9 rebounds and making 3.7 assists a game and connecting on 45.2 percent of his shots from the court.

Deng would have become a free agent at the end of the season. The Chicago Tribune reported he had rejected an extension with the Bulls worth \$10 million (7.35m euros) a year for three or four seasons.

The Cavaliers sent Chicago three future NBA Draft picks and the right to swap 2015 first-round draft picks with Cleveland as well as center Bynum, who was released before Tuesday's deadline to have the second half of his \$12.3 million deal become guaranteed, setting the stage for him to become a free agent.

The move saved the Bulls, who have already lost star Derrick Rose for the season to a knee injury, more than \$10 million in luxury tax payouts and gives them more chances at top young talent in the draft for long-term rebuilding.



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Football: Sunderland add to United pain in League Cup

SUNDERLAND (AFP) - Manchester United crashed to a third consecutive loss for the first time since 2001 after losing 2-1 at Sunderland in their League Cup semi-final first leg on Tuesday.

United were looking to bounce back from successive home defeats by Tottenham Hotspur, in the league, and Swansea City, in the FA Cup, but instead they lost again, and to the Premier League's bottom side.

Ryan Giggs, who had earlier hit the crossbar, gifted Sunderland the lead with an own goal and despite Nemanja Vidic equalising early in the second half, Fabio Borini's 65th-minute penalty gave the hosts victory.

For United manager David Moyes, the gloom grows ever darker, with his hopes of claiming a piece of major domestic silverware in his maiden season seriously compromised ahead of the second leg on January 22.

"We didn't do a lot wrong. I thought the referee was going to blow in our direction for the

first goal. I couldn't believe he gave a free-kick. It was a terrible decision.

"I thought our crowd were unbelievable. The players deserved to get a result. It's a two-legged game and I am really looking forward to the second leg."

Having eliminated Chelsea in the previous round, Sunderland remain on course to reach a first domestic cup final since 1992, when they lost to Liverpool in the FA Cup final.

"It would be massive (to reach the final)," manager Gus Poyet told Sky Sports.

"You don't get there too many times. It's many, many years from the last one, so we will try our best."

The importance of the fixture was evident in the fact that both managers made seven changes to the sides they fielded in the FA Cup at the weekend, although United were once again without the injured Wayne Rooney.

Eager to exploit any uncertainty in the visiting ranks, Sunderland looked to get balls into the box at the earliest op-



Sunderland's Italian forward Fabio Borini celebrates scoring a penalty

portunity and saw Borini drag an early shot wide from just outside the area.

However, emboldened by the purposeful running of Adnan Januzaj, United began to assert control of the game.

Giggs sent a deflected 25-yard shot against the crossbar, while Januzaj had a goal ruled out for offside and Vidic planted a header wide from a corner shortly before half-time.

Sunderland emerged unscathed, though, and in first-

half stoppage time they exploited defensive inattention from United to go ahead.

From Sebastian Larsson's deep free-kick, Wes Brown stole in behind Michael Carrick to volley the ball back across goal, and in attempting to prevent Phil Bardsley from prodding home, Giggs succeeded only in scoring himself.

The timing of the goal felt like a sucker-punch, but United regrouped at the interval and equalised within seven

minutes of kick-off in the second period.

Tom Cleverley curled a left-wing corner to the back post and Vidic outjumped former team-mates Brown and John O'Shea to power a header past Vito Mannone.

For the umpteenth time this season, however, United's momentum was to desert them.

Jonny Evans had to hobble off with an injury, and after Borini had sliced wide and Larsson had drawn a sharp save from visiting goalkeeper David de Gea, Sunderland restored their lead.

Cleverley was adjudged to have impeded Adam Johnson as he tore into the penalty area and after referee Andre Marriner pointed to the spot, Borini calmly lifted the ball past De Gea from 12 yards.

Scorer of a brace on his previous visit to the Stadium of Light, Januzaj carried the fight to Sunderland again, shooting narrowly off target on three occasions, but even their new boy wonder could not rescue United.